

WI-21  
Wicomico Presbyterian Church  
Salisbury  
Public worship

1859, 1910

Prominently situated on the north side of US Route 50 in the center of Salisbury is the Wicomico Presbyterian Church, a building that blends a mid 19th century Romanesque Revival sanctuary erected in 1859 with a Colonial Revival front designed by the Baltimore architectural firm of Owens and Sisco and erected in 1910. Centered on the front wall is a multi-storied entrance tower topped by an octagonal broach spire. The main body of the church dates from the mid 19th century and has a series of round arched windows and brick corbelling on the east and west sides. The interior was extensively remodeled during the early 20th century, but remnants of the original decorative painting remain in places. Mid to late 20th century additions have been attached to the back of the building.

Wicomico Presbyterian Church traces its origin and early worship in this region to the early 1670s. The first three church buildings were located on sites west of Salisbury, initially on a site in the vicinity of Upper Ferry and then on two parcels of land along Rockawalkin Creek. The congregation remained at the second Rockawalkin site until the early 19th century when it was decided that a town church would be much more convenient to a growing congregation in Salisbury. In 1830 a single-story, gable-front frame building was erected on a lot donated by Mrs. Sarah Huston of Poplar Hill. The initial town church stood near the intersection Poplar Hill Avenue and Church Street until 1838 when it was moved to the present church site on Broad Street.

The steady growth of Salisbury during the pre-Civil War years encouraged the Presbyterians to erect a new brick church in 1859 during the pastorship of Reverend J. T. H. Waite. Measuring 43' across by 65' deep, the Romanesque inspired building included a four-story entrance and bell tower in front and a polygonal lecture room to the rear. The interior was embellished with elaborate paint decoration. The contract for the brick church was executed under the guidance and skill of W. Angelo Powell for a little more than \$4,000.

By the turn of the twentieth century the 1859 building was no longer large enough to accommodate an expanded congregation. In 1908 it was decided that the church would be enlarged by adding 30' to 40' in front and introducing a new entrance tower. The addition and redesign of the front was accomplished by the Baltimore architectural firm of Owen and Sisco and the work was executed by Salisbury contractor Thomas M. Slemons. Further additions to the church facilities were made in 1941 and 1958.

## MARYLAND HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN INFORMATION

RESOURCE NAME: Wicomico Presbyterian Church

MHT INVENTORY NUMBER: WI-21

## MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DATA

1. Historic Period Theme(s):  
Architecture  
Religion
2. Geographic Orientation: Eastern Shore
3. Chronological/Development Period(s): Industrial/Urban Dominance  
1870-1930
4. Resource Type(s): Church

**Maryland Historical Trust  
State Historic Sites Inventory Form**

**MARYLAND INVENTORY OF  
HISTORIC PROPERTIES**

Survey No. WI-21

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

**1. Name** (indicate preferred name)

historic Wicomico Presbyterian Church

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 129 Broad Street ☐ not for publication

city, town Salisbury ☐ vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Wicomico

**3. Classification**

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

**4. Owner of Property** (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Trustees of Wicomico Presbyterian Church

street & number 129 Broad Street telephone no.:

city, town Salisbury state and zip code Maryland 21801

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Wicomico County Clerk of Court liber

street & number Wicomico County Courthouse folio

city, town Salisbury state MD 21801

**6. Representation in Existing** Historical Surveys

title Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties

date 1972 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records Maryland Historical Trust

city, town Crownsville state MD 21032

## 7. Description

Survey No. WI-21

### Condition

☐ excellent  
☒ good  
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated  
☐ ruins  
☐ unexposed

### Check one

☐ unaltered  
☒ altered

### Check one

☒ original site  
☐ moved      date of move \_\_\_\_\_

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The Wicomico Presbyterian Church is located at 129 Broad Street in the center of Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland. The single-story brick church faces south with the gable roof oriented on a north/south axis.

Built in 1859 and extensively reworked in 1910, the rectangular single-story mid 19th century brick church is laid in eight-course common bond, and the steeply pitched roof is covered with slate shingles. The front of the church was redesigned and enlarged in 1910. The early twentieth century facade is laid in stretcher bond with an entrance and bell tower rising in the center. Attached to the back of the building is a series of brick additions that have expanded the Sunday School and administrative offices.

The south (main) facade is a symmetrical elevation with a center double door entrance incorporated within a broad, round arched opening filled with a colored glass transom. The entrance arch is fitted with a keystone, and the door sill is marble. Fixed in the southeast corner of the tower is a large marble datestone inscribed, "Wicomico Presbyterian Church, Organized 1683-1690, Erected 1859, Rebuilt 1910." On each side of the tower are round arched window openings spanned by triple tiered rowlock arches. The second level is marked by round windows in each side with a keystoned brick border highlighting each opening. The corners of the tower are accented with brick quoins. Rising atop the second story of the tower is an octagonal drum pierced by round arched louvered openings in each side. Skirting the perimeter of the tower is a Colonial Revival balustrade with large square newel posts topped by ball finials. Rising atop the drum is an octagonal broach spire with a bell-curved base. Piercing the wall to each side of the tower are large round arched window openings filled with colored glass. The corners of the church are accented with quoins executed in the same brick as the church.

Each side of the church is marked by a series of six round arched sanctuary windows filled with colored glass. The individual bays are defined by plain brick pilasters, and at the over each window is a row of corbeled brickwork. The southeast corner of the church features a large stone date plaque inscribed, "Wicomico Church, A.D. 1859." The base of the side walls is embellished with a stepped watertable.

The north gable end of the mid 19th-century church is largely covered by a mid 20th century brick addition. The edge of the roof is flush and trimmed with a molded bargeboard.

The interior has been extensively remodeled during the 20th century. Remnants of mid 19th century decorative painting survives in a few areas.

## 8. Significance

Survey No. WI-21

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1859, 1910

**Builder/Architect**

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Prominently situated on the north side of US Route 50 in the center of Salisbury is the Wicomico Presbyterian Church, a building that blends a mid 19th century Romanesque Revival sanctuary erected in 1859 with a Colonial Revival front designed by the Baltimore architectural firm of Owens and Sisco and erected in 1910. Centered on the front wall is a multi-storied entrance tower topped by an octagonal broach spire. The main body of the church dates from the mid 19th century and has a series of round arched windows and brick corbelling on the east and west sides. The interior was extensively remodeled during the early 20th century, but remnants of the original decorative painting remain in places. Mid to late 20th century additions have been attached to the back of the building.

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The steady growth of Salisbury during the pre-Civil War years encouraged the Presbyterians to erect a new brick church in 1859 during the pastorship of Reverend J. T. H. Waite.<sup>2</sup> Measuring 43' across by 65' deep, the Romanesque inspired building included a four-story entrance and bell tower in front and a polygonal lecture room to the rear. The interior was embellished with elaborate paint decoration. The contract for the brick church was executed under the guidance and skill of W. Angelo Powell for a little

<sup>1</sup> Slemons, Mrs. J. William, *Wicomico Presbyterian Church*, Salisbury, Maryland (1683-1959), p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* p. 13.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. WI-21

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting NorthingB 

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Zone Easting NorthingC 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification \_\_\_\_\_

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Paul B. Touart, Architectural Historian

organization Private Consultant

date 5/18/98

street &amp; number P. O. Box 5

telephone 410-651-1094

city or town Westover

state Maryland 21871

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST  
DHCP/DHCD  
100 COMMUNITY PLACE  
CROWNSVILLE, MD 21032-2023  
514-7600

## 8.1 SIGNIFICANCE

Wicomico Presbyterian Church, WI-21  
129 Broad Street  
Salisbury, Wicomico County, Maryland

more than \$4,000.<sup>3</sup>

By the turn of the twentieth century the 1859 building was no longer large enough to accommodate an expanded congregation. In 1908 it was decided that the church would be enlarged by adding 30' to 40' in front and introducing a new entrance tower. The redesign of the building was accomplished by the Baltimore architectural firm of Owen and Sisco and the work was executed by Salisbury contractor Thomas M. Slemons.<sup>4</sup> Further additions to the church facilities were made in 1941 and 1958.

The Wicomico Presbyterian Church is a highly important architectural and historical site in the City of Salisbury. It deserves listing in *Category A*, which identifies buildings that must be preserved.

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* p. 15.

<sup>4</sup> *Salisbury Advertiser*, April 30, 1910.



WICOMICO PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH in Salisbury, Maryland, before it was remodelled.

WI-21



Salisbury, Md., Saturday, April 30, 1910.

## CORNER STONE

Unearthed. Wicomico Presbyterian Church,  
Interesting Relics Found Including Copy  
Of The Salisbury ADVERTISER.

An incident of very great interest took place at the Wicomico Presbyterian Church on Wednesday morning of this week when representatives of the session and the Church committee met to unearth the Corner Stone of the old church.

In the hollow of the stone a tin box was found, rusted but intact, containing a bible, a Confession of Faith of the Presbyterian Church, a list of the ministers of the General Assembly for the year 1858, a copy of the SALISBURY ADVERTISER, giving an account of the erecting of the building a list of the members of the Church at the time and a list of contributors with the amount contributed opposite each name. Only one coin was found, a penny of the year 1858. The church was erected in 1859, during the ministry of the Rev. Dr. Waite, whose pastorate was a long and very successful one, he being a man of great influence in the community.

After the contents of the box had been inspected by those present, they were carefully replaced and entrusted to the care of the Clerk of the Session, Rev. Mr. Beale, the present pastor of the Church, then led in a fervent prayer thanking Almighty God for his past blessings and beseeching Him for his continued presence and benediction.

The old corner stone will likely be placed in the wall where the addition begins and new corner stone be laid in the front of the new tower. The

work of enlarging the church is being done by contractor Thomas M. Slemmons under the personal supervision of Owen and Sisco, architects of Baltimore City and will cost about \$8,000. The work is to be completed by September the first.



Gents' furnishing Goods, &c. No. 47 Main St.  
**WILLIS AND SON**, Wholesale and Retail  
 alers in Groceries, Provisions, Notions, Gilling-  
 ine, Wood and Willow-ware, Fishing Tackle,  
 ton and Manila Rope, Corn-meal, &c. No. 70  
 in Street.  
**LAYMAN**, Dealer in Groceries, Tobacco,  
 tions and General Merchandise. No. 69 Main  
 set.

#### Editors.

**JEL MALONE**, Editor of the "Salisbury  
 verti-  
**BE** litor and Publisher of the "Eastern  
 orent.

#### Fruit Dealer.

**CATHELL**, Dealer in, and Grower of Small  
 uits. Salisbury, Md.

#### Hotel.

**N TRACY**, Proprietor of the "Peninsula Ho-  
 l," also of the "Atlantic Hotel," "Ocean City."

sale and Retail Dealer in Dressed Flooring,  
 faced Boards, House-framing, Box-boards, Oak  
 Lumber suitable for Vessel Material, Gum, Wal-  
 nut, Oak and Cherry Hubs, Balusters, Newel Posts,  
 Fence Pickets, Post Caps, Flower Vases, Broom  
 Handles, Spinning Wheels, Pumps. Turning of  
 all Kinds and Styles of Wood and Iron a Specialty.  
 Wool carded from July 1st to October 31st. Also  
 Manufacturer of Flour, Meal and Feed Stuff. Wi-  
 comico Falls Mills, No. 2 Mill Street, Salisbury, Md.

#### Mills.

**GEO. W. LEONARD**, Farmer and Proprietor of  
 Saw and Grist Mill. Res. and mill  $4\frac{1}{2}$  miles north  
 of Salisbury.  
**JOHN WILLIAMS**, Farmer and Proprietor of  
 Saw and Grist Mill  $5\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Salisbury.  
**GEO. H. W. BUARK**, Farmer and Proprietor of  
 "Ruark Mills"  $3\frac{1}{2}$  miles north of Salisbury. Res.  
 Salisbury.  
**M. A. PARSONS**, Proprietor of S. S. Mill,  $2\frac{1}{2}$   
 miles west of Salisbury on Wicomico River. Also  
 Proprietor of Marine Railway.

#### Physician.

**Dr. F. M. SLEMONS**, Physician and Surgeon.

# SALISBURY

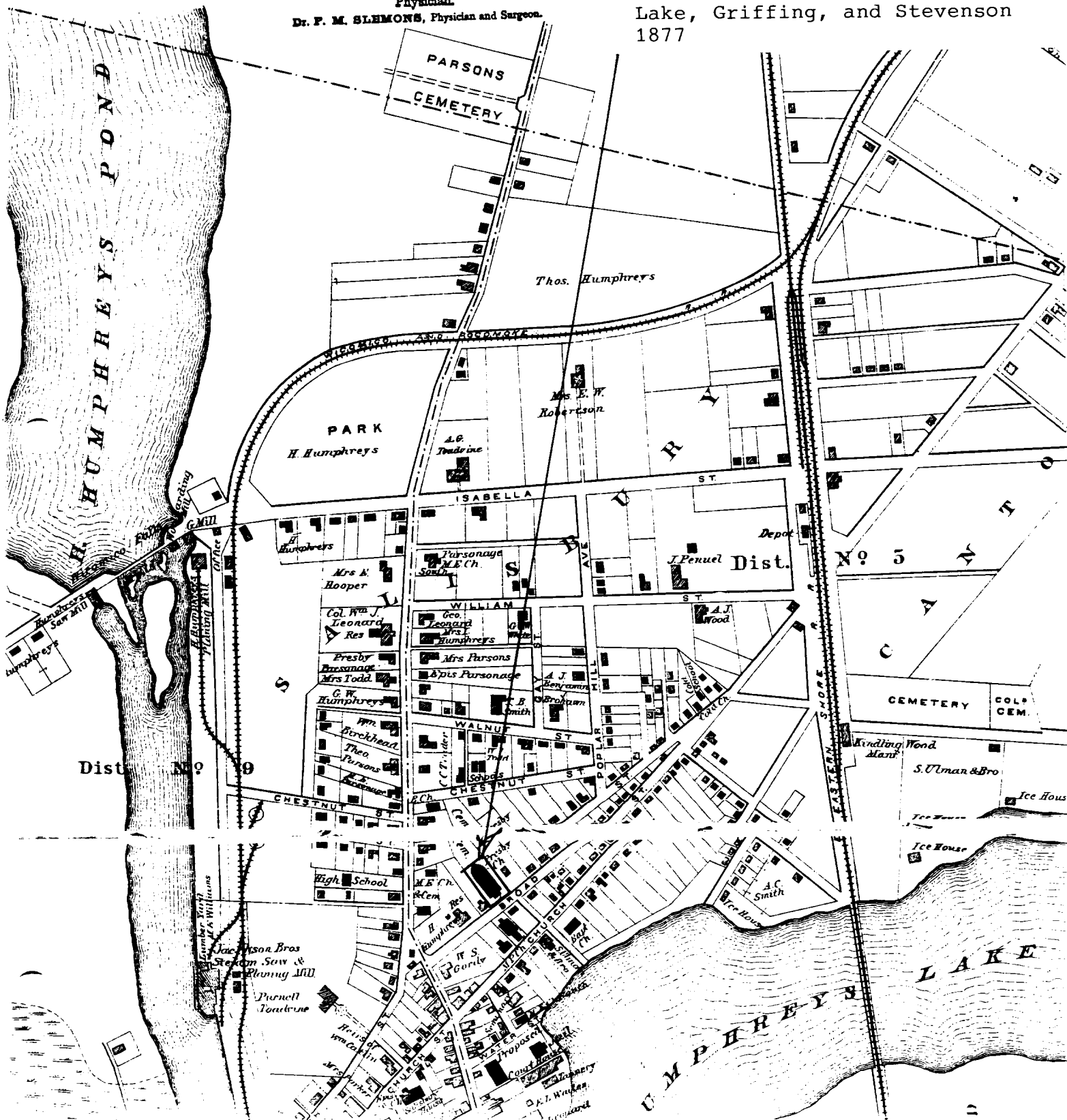
WICOMICO CO.

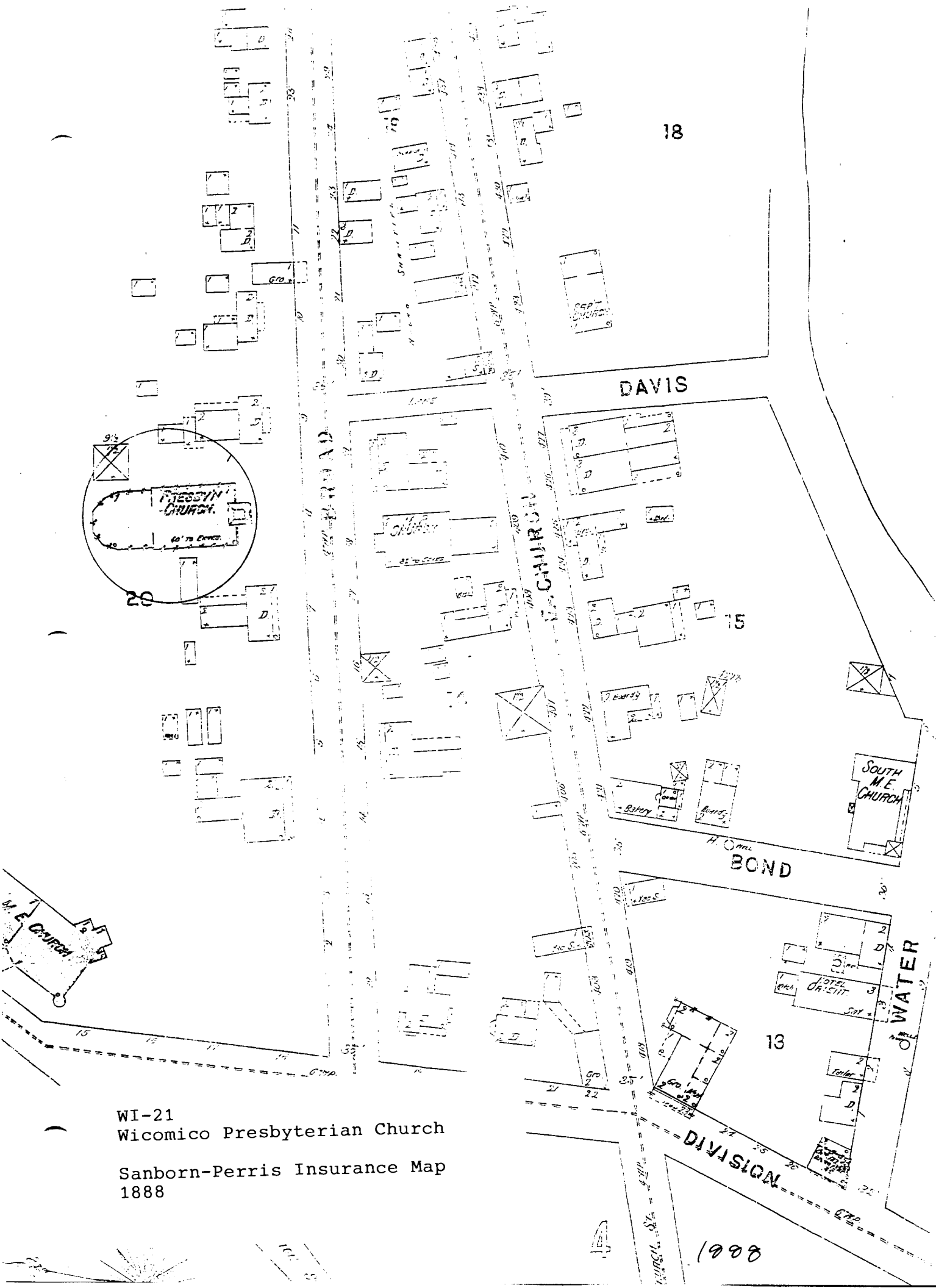
*Dist. Nos 95 & 8*

WI-21

Wicomico Presbyterian Church  
 Salisbury

Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson  
 1877





WI-21  
Wicomico Presbyterian Church  
Sanborn-Perris Insurance Map  
1888

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

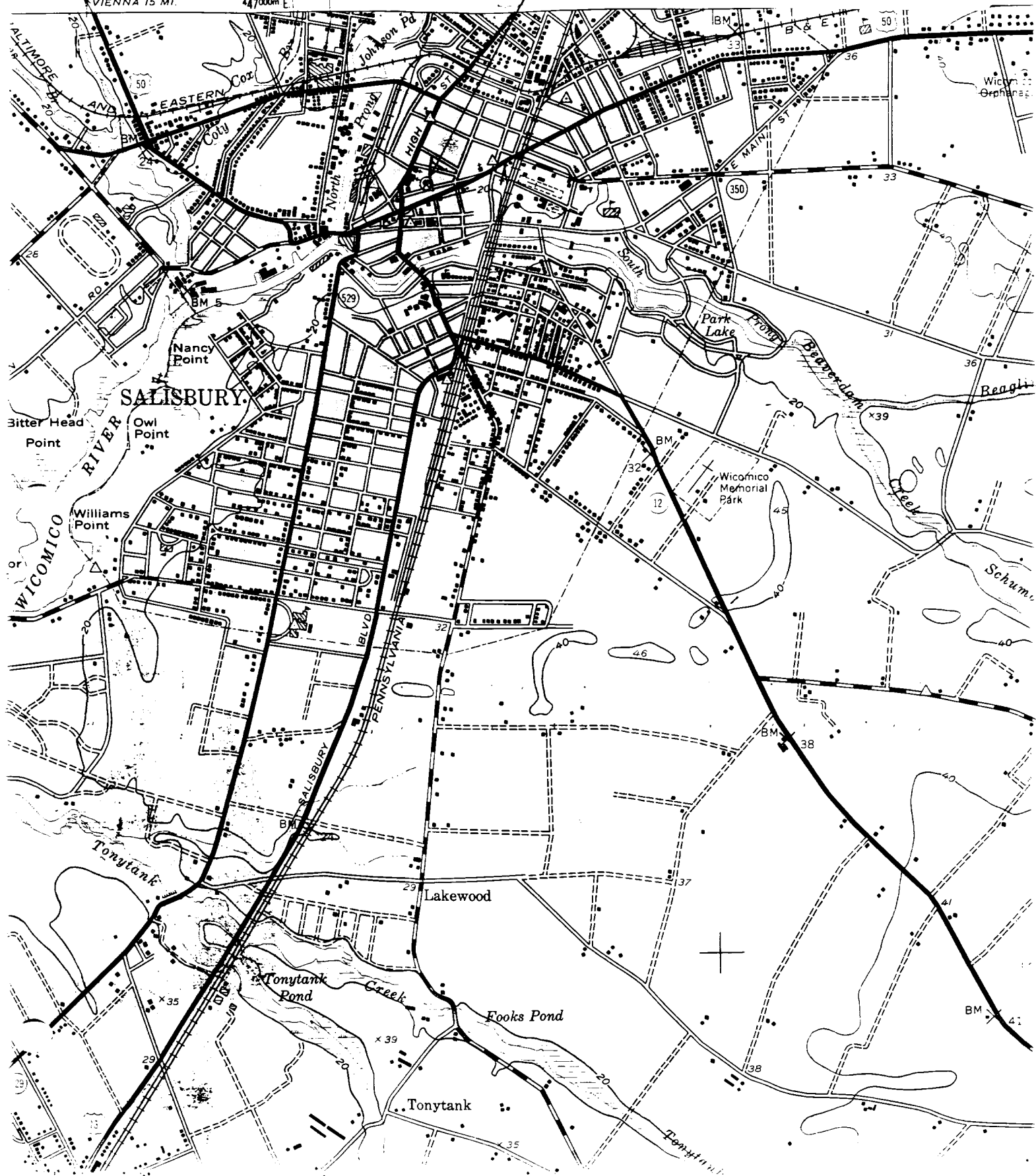
CAMBRIDGE 31 MI.  
VIENNA 15 MI.

447000m E

WI-21

Wicomico Presbyterian Church

Salisbury, Maryland Quadrangle  
1942



<p>1. STATE <u>Maryland</u> COUNTY <u>Wicomico</u> TOWN <u>Salisbury</u> VICINITY <u>North</u> STREET NO. <u>Broad Street at North end</u> ORIGINAL OWNER <u>Baptist</u> ORIGINAL USE <u>Religious</u> PRESENT OWNER <u>Wicomico Presby.</u> PRESENT USE <u>Religious</u> WALL CONSTRUCTION <u>brick</u> NO. OF STORIES <u>1</u></p>	<p>HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY INVENTORY</p> <p>2. NAME <u>Wicomico Presbyterian Church</u> DATE OR PERIOD <u>1859 + 1910</u> STYLE <u>Greek Revival &amp; "Colonial Revival"</u> ARCHITECT BUILDER</p> <p>3. FOR LIBRARY OF CONGRESS USE</p>
<p>4. NOTABLE FEATURES, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE AND DESCRIPTION</p> <p>OPEN TO PUBLIC <u>yes</u></p> <p><u>3 bays wide and six deep</u></p> <p><u>Interior</u></p> <p>dark wood pews dark wainscot 8 front windows same 4 back ones with figures facade (back of church -- 2 large stain glass windows and double doors with stain glass transom wood ceiling supported by [see sketch on M. Bourne's handwritten notes]</p> <p><u>Pulpit</u></p> <p>Reader's chair flanked by two chairs on platform table on floor level organ in large ? behind chair and directly opposite door</p> <p>wall -- plaster to look like ? rope-like design around windows</p>	
<p>5. PHYSICAL CONDITION OF STRUCTURE    Endangered <u>NO</u>    Interior <u>good</u>    Exterior <u>good</u></p> <p>wood ceiling</p> <p>[continued on reverse side]</p>	
<p>6. LOCATION MAP (Plan Optional)</p> <p>3. PUBLISHED SOURCES (Author, Title, Pages) INTERVIEWS, RECORDS, PHOTOS, ETC.</p>	<p>7. PHOTOGRAPH</p> <p>9. NAME, ADDRESS AND TITLE OF RECORDER</p> <p><u>Michael Bourne</u> MD. HISTORICAL TRUST BOX 1704 ANNAPOLIS, MD. 21404 DATE OF RECORD <u>Jan, 1970</u></p>

WI-21

Wicomico Presbyterian Church

Facade

tower in middle between two wide stain glass windows --  
heavy frieze below pediment.

tower has double door with fanlight -- round windows  
in center of tower

balustrade and top -- tall louvered cupola with spire  
atop a slate roof

erected 1859 -- rebuilt 1910

Original building was four bays deep. The two bays and facade  
nearest street were built in 1910

Wacona Presbyt. Church.

WI-21

3 bays wide + 6 deep

1859

Interior

dark wood pews -

" wainscot

8 front with same

4 back ones with figure

foreend (back, tank) 2 large stain glass windows  
+ double door w/ stain glass transoms.

wood ceiling supported by 5



Pulpit

Readers chair flanked by 2 chairs on platform  
table on floor level

Chair behind ~~table~~ Readers chair

Organ - large arched behind chair +  
double door opposite door.

Wall - plaster to look like color masonry  
repetitive design around windows -  
wood ceiling -



Wilcomino Protestant Church -

facade -

tower in middle b/w 2 wide stain glass windows. - heavy frieze below pediment.

tower has double door w/ fanlight - round window in center of tower -

balustrade and top - tall fluted cupola with spire atop w/ skating ring

erected 1859 - ~~rebuilt~~ 1910.

Original building was 4 bays deep. the 2 bays + facade nearest street were built: 1910.



WI-21 Wicomico Presbyterian Church

